

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

March 19, 2018

The Honorable Mario Diaz-Balart
Chairman
Subcommittee on Transportation, Housing and
Urban Development, and Related Agencies
2358-A Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable David Price
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Transportation, Housing and
Urban Development, and Related Agencies
2358-A Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairman Diaz-Balart and Ranking Member Price:

As you prepare the Fiscal Year 2019 Transportation, Housing and Urban Development, and Related Agencies appropriations bill, I ask that you support robust funding for the Section 202 Supportive Housing for the Elderly program and that it include funding for new construction.

This program offers a vital service to our communities, and for elderly Americans. The public housing rental assistance and interest-free capital advances provided by Section 202 address the needs of the 25 million American seniors over the age of 60 that are economically insecure, as reported by the National Council on Aging. The National Low Income Housing Coalition (NLIHC) has determined that thirty-eight percent of tenants under the Section 202 program are either frail, or near-frail. The program confronts this need by providing a Service Coordinators grant, ensuring that tenants can still access basic care and services through employed staff. While these services have been funded in previous fiscal years, resources have not been provided for constructing new Section 202 units since Fiscal Year 2011.

Providing funding to develop new units is more imperative now than ever before. According to the NLIHC, the number of households with residents over the age of 65 is projected to grow from 29.6 million in 2015 to 49.6 million in the year 2035. As you may know, Section 202 services seniors that are over the age of 62; if poverty rates are constant, the Joint Center for Housing Studies at Harvard University suggests that the number of homeless adults aged 62 and over would drastically increase from the reported 44,000 in 2010, to over 95,000 by the year 2050. Providing more construction funding could curtail this decline, and make sure shelter can be provided for one of our most vulnerable populations, particularly at a time when market-rate rents are rising so quickly.

Supporting funding for new construction would send a clear message to low-income seniors that their needs for affordable housing deserve attention and must be met. I thank you for your consideration of this request and for your continued work on behalf of low-income senior citizens.

Sincerely,


Joseph Crowley
Member of Congress